

Division of Computer Research and Technology Performance Management Plan

A. Purpose and Authority. This plan implements 5 USC Chapter 43, 5 CFR Part 430, the provisions of the Department of Health and Human Services' Performance Appraisal System (HHS Instruction 430-7, dated November 9, 1995). The NIH Plan (dated March 96). Definitions of terms may be found in the HHS plan.

B. Coverage. The DCRT Performance Management Plan applies to all GS/GM, and ST employees and is effective upon signature.

C. Policy. Performance management at the National Institutes of Health is the process by which individual and organizational goals are communicated to employees; individual and team accountability for accomplishing organizational goals is identified; individual and organizational performance is evaluated, discussed with employees and as needed improvements proposed; and the results are used as a basis for appropriate personnel actions. DCRT's Performance Management Program supports these goals.

Performance management is also the shared responsibility of employees and managers. Therefore, it is also the policy of the DCRT that employees be involved in the establishment of the new performance appraisal programs and that all employees be trained and educated on the importance of performance development, feedback and communication.

D. Responsibilities.

(1) Employees are responsible for:

- (a) participating with their rating official in determining goals, defining performance elements and standards and revising them as necessary during the rating period;
- (b) assuring they have a clear understanding of their rating official's expectations and requesting clarification if necessary.
- (c) managing their performance to achieve identified goals and bringing to their rating official's attention any circumstances that may affect the achievement of goals;
- (d) seeking feedback from their rating official; and
- (e) taking action to improve aspects of performance identified as not meeting expectations.

(2) Rating officials are responsible for:

- (a) determining goals, defining performance elements and standards with employee input and documenting them on the performance plan;
- (b) monitoring employee performance during the rating period and communicating on an on-going basis, as appropriate, with employees about their performance;
- (c) Providing feedback to and conducting formal progress reviews with all employees;
- (d) assisting all employees in improving aspects of performance and working more closely with those employees whose performance is identified as not meeting expectations;
- (e) appraising employees' performance at the end of the rating period or when an employee changes positions, and as necessary, meeting with employees to discuss the performance rating and employee developmental needs; and
- (f) taking appropriate action for employees who do not meet expectations and recognizing employees as appropriate for successful performance.

(3) Reviewing officials are responsible for reviewing and approving all ratings of all employees in their organizations prior to the rating being communicated to the employee.

(4) DCRT Director is responsible for establishing an organizational performance appraisal program that complies with the parameters set forth in the NIH Performance Appraisal Program Plan and for monitoring the implementation of those plans to ensure equity across the DCRT.

(5) The Director, Office of Human Resource Management, NIH, is responsible for developing performance appraisal policy, approving and certifying the regulatory adequacy of individual ICD performance appraisal programs, and as necessary, evaluating performance appraisal programs at the NIH.

E. Eligibility for Rating. To be eligible for a rating, an employee must have worked under a performance plan for at least 120 days.

F. Rating Cycle/Period. Employees will be rated annually on a calendar year basis.

G. Performance Plans. (See Appendix A: PM draft cover sheet)

- (1) Employee performance plans must contain one or more critical elements that address individual performance that the employee will be expected to achieve during the rating period. Employee performance plans may also include if appropriate, an element addressing individual contributions to team goals.
- (2) Two distinctly different levels (Acceptable and Unacceptable) will be used for rating

performance on each critical element. A written performance standard will be established at the Acceptable level for each performance element. An Acceptable level will be equivalent to Level 3 and an Unacceptable level equivalent to Level 1. (An optional form for developing and documenting performance plans is attached as Appendix A).

- (3) The NIH requires only the two performance levels for each critical element and will have only two summary ratings as described in (2) above. However, there are two methods that Supervisors may use to further communicate performance results/expectations. Supervisors may include additional performance elements in their plan that address dimensions or aspects of individual, team, or organizational performance. If used, additional performance elements cannot be used in deriving the summary rating. Another option open to Supervisors is to allow each critical element to be rated at a level above Acceptable. the only summary ratings allowed would be those at Acceptable and Unacceptable.
- (4) Individual Development Plans (IDP) are attached to the employee's EPMS to encourage verbal and written communication between the supervisor and the employee in the area of career development. The IDP is not to be rated and is optional for the employee. Employees who do not wish to incorporate a formal IDP are required to sign the declination line on the cover of the EPMS. (see Appendix B)
- (5) Critical EEO element is mandatory for all code 2 supervisors until NIH determines otherwise. See Appendix C for the required standard EEO element.

H. Performance Appraisal

- (1) Only performance under critical elements will be used to determine final summary ratings. An employee must receive a rating of Acceptable on all critical elements in order to be assigned an Acceptable rating. An employee who receives an Unacceptable rating on one or more critical elements will receive an Unacceptable rating. This applies even if the Supervisor chooses to use ratings levels for elements above Acceptable.
- (2) Performance in all positions for which an employee has served for 120 days (e.g., Performance of employees who are detailed or temporarily promoted during the appraisal period) will be considered in final ratings.
- (3) For employees receiving an Unacceptable rating, the rating official must provide a written explanation describing the specific areas in which the employee did not meet the performance standard(s).
- (4) For an employee who did not work under a performance plan for the specified minimum appraisal period, the rating period will be extended until that specified time has been completed. The rating official will rate the employee's performance at the end of this extension.

- (5) Results of external reviews (e.g. Board of Scientific counselors reviews) can be considered by supervisors in preparing appraisals as appropriate. However, they cannot substitute for the supervisor's review and decision.
- I. Progress Reviews. Feedback on performance is an important component of performance management. Feedback should be given continuously, not just at specified periods of time or at a specific point in a cycle. Feedback should also be provided on those aspects of performance that are done well as well as those that may need improvement. At least one progress review is required during the rating period for all employees. Additionally, supervisors are encouraged to build in feedback mechanisms throughout the performance cycle for all employees. (Note: No requirements for mid-year signature)
- J. Performance Problems. (NOTE: Administrative or performance-based actions that were initiated under the Department's Performance Management Plan dated 4/26/93 continue to be governed by the policies and procedures of that Plan.)
- (1) If at any time during the rating period, an employee's performance is deemed to be Unacceptable in one or more critical elements, the employee will be given a performance improvement plan (PIP) and an opportunity to demonstrate Acceptable performance.
 - (2) The requirements for performance improvement plans are included in the DHHS instruction, section F. In short, the employee must be informed in writing that his/her performance is Unacceptable; the element(s) on which that rating is based and how the employee's performance was Unacceptable; what the employee must do to reach the Acceptable level of performance; the specific assistance that will be provided to help the employee; the time by which the performance must reach the Acceptable level; and the action that may be initiated if the performance does not improve to the Acceptable level.
 - (3) If after the PIP period is completed and the employee's performance still has not improved to the Acceptable level of performance, action will be initiated to reassign, reduce in grade or remove the employee.
- K. Employee Recognition. Performance ratings no longer automatically generate cash bonuses. However, the performance of a specific act, duty or responsibility is the appropriate rationale for providing employee recognition. Standard criteria for Quality Step Increases (QSI) and criteria to recognize the special qualities, abilities, and/or efforts of employees are incorporated in the NIH Employee Recognition and Awards Program.

DCRT Individual Performance Plan		
<i>Part I - Administrative Data</i>		
Name	SSN	Pay Plan/Series/Grade
Organization	Check One: Covered By: <input type="checkbox"/> GS <input type="checkbox"/> SES <input type="checkbox"/> SSS/ST	
Performance Management Period	Number of Critical Elements:	
From	To	
<i>Part II - Plan Establishment</i>		
Rater's Name and Title	Rater's Signature	Date
Reviewer's name	Reviewer's Signature	Date
Employee's Signature		Date
<i>Part III - Summary Rating</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Acceptable		<input type="checkbox"/> Unacceptable
Rater's Name and Title	Rater's Signature	Date
Reviewer's Name and Title	Reviewer's Signature	Date
Employee's Signature		Date
<i>Part IV - Individual Development Plan</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> IDP Initiated <input type="checkbox"/> I do not want an IDP at this time.		

DCRT Individual Development Plan

Name: _____ Organization: _____ Date Plan Last Updated: _____

Present Position/Series/Grade: _____, _____ - _____ Current Promotion Potential: _____

Employee's Career Goals: Long Term (>3 years); Short Term (<3 years):

Specific Plan to Attain Short Term Goals Including Approximate Dates:
(Actual courses, conferences, committees, specific on-the-job assignments, name of mentor)

General Plan to Attain Long Term Goals Including Approximate Dates:

Explain How IDP Relates to Employee's Duties and Career Goals:

Employee Signature and Date

Supervisor Signature and Date

This form is to be completed and attached to the employee's performance plan. Process should be completed jointly by employee and supervisor. If employee does not wish to incorporate a formal IDP, indicate so by having them sign the declination line on the PM cover sheet.

APPENDIX C

1996 EEO Critical Performance Element GM/GS/WS Managers and Supervisors

CRITICAL ELEMENT: Supports the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program as well as the Institute, Center, or Division's (ICD) affirmative action program, workplace diversity initiative, and the EEO complaint resolution programs.

Performance Standards:

LEVEL 3 - ACCEPTABLE

Supports the goals of the ICD's Affirmative Action Plan through a demonstrated commitment to recruit, hire, and promote from representative pools of candidates. Attends conferences and seminars to promote networking and outreach for underrepresented communities. Seeks to expand opportunities for entry and junior level staff to compete for vacancies through training, details and developmental assignments.

Supports the ICD's workplace diversity initiative by developing and implementing strategies that promote the potential of all employees in meeting mission goals. Opportunities include: educating subordinate supervisors and employees about managing diversity; establishing multi-cultural work teams; encouraging scientific and administrative conference and lecture planners to consider diversity when arranging for speakers and lecturers; becoming a mentor, and encouraging, and providing career development opportunities for all employees.

Recognizes exceptional performance and contributions of employees by recommending or approving appropriate monetary or honorary awards, e.g., rewarding excellence in managing diversity by subordinate supervisors and employees.

Establishes a zero tolerance for harrassment and discrimination.

Works to educate employees regarding their rights and responsibilities through open communication sessions, town meetings, focus groups, and employee feedback sessions. Actively supports the resolution of informal and formal EEO complaints at the earliest possible stage.

Provides reasonable accommodation to employees and other individuals with disabilities in accordance with Federal and NIH regulations and policies.